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Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6431**

January 15, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft  
US Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

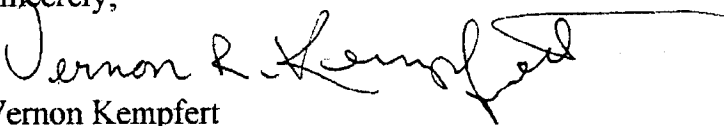
Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

As a citizen of a state party to the pending Microsoft settlement, I would like to offer my support to the Justice Department approving the current deal and ending further legal action in this case. The seemingly envious reaction of the government to Microsoft's growing power and dominance in the technology industry led to a lawsuit, then a misguided judgement, that far over-reached the right of government to manipulate the marketplace. This agreement seems like a reasonable compromise and should be approved, or risk alienating the public and hurting the economy.

Based on the terms of the settlement, it would seem that Microsoft has made great strides to offer competitors more opportunities to succeed. They have agreed to not retaliate against computer makers who ship competitive software, offering broader rights to promote non-Microsoft programs within Windows and providing the top 20 manufacturers a uniform price structure to back up that promise. Starting with Microsoft XP, they will begin to provide a mechanism to make it easy to add access to competitive software, such as those from AOL or Real Networks, or even remove features within Windows. These steps seem like a major opportunity for competitors to show they can thrive in the Windows environment.

I ask for your approval of this very fair settlement, as both sides have proven able to compromise through negotiation with a court-appointed mediator and that work should be upheld. I appreciate your time and look forward to an intelligent decision.

Sincerely,

  
Vernon Kempfert